

## THE IMPLEMENTATION OF INFORMATION GAP IN TEACHING SPEAKING AT THE SECOND GRADE

Astuti Wulandari, Patuan Raja, Sudirman  
University of Lampung

[wulandariastuti17@gmail.com](mailto:wulandariastuti17@gmail.com)

**Abstrak:** Tujuan penelitian ini adalah (1) mencari tahu apakah ada peningkatan dari kemampuan berbicara siswa setelah diajar melalui *Information Gap* dan (2) mencari tahu aspek berbicara yang paling mengalami kemajuan setelah perlakuan. Subjek penelitian adalah 35 siswa dari kelas VIII D, siswa kelas dua Mts Pelita Purwodadi. Rancangan penelitian adalah *one group pretest posttest*. Perlakuan dilakukan dalam tiga pertemuan dengan waktu 80 menit untuk setiap pertemuan. Data diambil dari tes berbicara dan dianalisis menggunakan *repeated measure t-test*. Hasil penelitian memperlihatkan bahwa ada perbedaan berarti pada kemampuan berbicara siswa ( $p < 0.05$ ,  $p = 0.00$ ). Nilai rata-rata sebelum perlakuan adalah 64,23 dan setelah percobaan adalah 75,17. Selanjutnya, *grammar* adalah aspek berbicara yang paling mengalami kemajuan. Dari hasil ini, memperlihatkan bahwa *Information Gap* adalah tehnik yang baik untuk membantu siswa dalam belajar berbicara.

**Kata kunci:** *Information Gap*, berbicara, peningkatan.

**Abstract:** The aims of this research were (1) to find out whether there was an improvement of the students' speaking ability after they were taught through information gap and (2) to find out which aspect of speaking skills increased the most after the treatments. The subject was 35 students of class VIII D, the second year students of MTs Pelita Purwodadi. The research design was one group pretest posttest. The treatments were conducted in three meetings with 80 minutes for each meeting. The data were taken using speaking test and were analyzed by using repeated measure t-test. The result showed that there was a significant difference on students' speaking ability ( $p < 0.05$ ,  $p = 0.00$ ). The average scores of the pretest was 64.23 and the posttest was 75.17. Furthermore, grammar was the speaking aspect that increased the most. From this result, it shows that Information Gap is an appropriate technique to help the students' in learning speaking.

**Keywords:** Information Gap, speaking, improvement

## INTRODUCTION

English is one of important lesson that is studied in Junior High School. One of English skills that is included in curriculum of 2013 for students to acquire is speaking. In this curriculum, students are expected to be able to converse by using simple dialogue based on the materials given by teachers. According to Nunan (1996), a success in language learning is measured in terms of the ability to carry out a conversation in the (target) language. In other words, speaking is regarded as the measure of knowing the language.

Speaking is the active production skill and use of oral production (Widowson, 1994). It needs the capability of the learners to be able to use the target language in communicating with others. Students who are able to communicate by using English fluently with communicative competence including the right grammar, pronunciation, fluency, accuracy, and appropriate vocabularies will be considered to have skill in using English. However, to achieve this highest goal of learning English is not an easy thing. As Jondeya (2011) states in her research that many complaints are being raised by teachers' regarding students' low level of English language. It proves that English is really difficult for the learners who try to use and understand it. Therefore, students need more opportunities to practice speaking English inside and outside classroom. For students who study English in Junior High School, there were many problems that they faced when they were willing to speak in English (Jondeya, 2011; Suputri, 2014). First, the students are afraid of making mistakes. The lack of the vocabulary and pronunciation makes students sometimes create mistakes in uttering sentences in English. Second, the problem that students face in studying English is the lack of opportunity of using the target language. When the researcher asked them how they were taught in school, they said that they seldom did speaking. In Indonesia, English is a foreign language, not the second language. Therefore, the biggest chance that the students have to use English is in school.

One of the techniques which can be applied in classroom activities to promote students' speaking skill is using information gap. Shabrina (2013) in her script proves that the use of information gap can improve students speaking ability for senior high school students. The students in her research also are able to enjoy learning English through this technique. In information gap activity, one person has certain information that must be shared with others in order to solve a problem, gather information or make decisions (Neu and Reeser, 1997:127). In the process, the learners will be given different uncompleted information and they should ask the other students in order to complete the information. In this activity, students who are divided in pairs or groups are forced to share the information they have to solve the problem.

Information gap is one of the techniques that is considered to be able to improve students' English speaking skill (Jondeya, 2011; Shabrina, 2013; Suputri, 2014). Teacher as source of information will give the learners explanation first about the vocabulary and examples of how to pronounce the words use in the topic at the beginning of the lesson. Therefore, the learners are able to expect what kind of

knowledge they will get at the end of the activity. Teachers only need to give the explanation about the activity and review of the vocabulary needed for the activity where the students will later complete the task on their own. Then, by using information gap, students will have the opportunity to use English and reflect it as a means of communication in real life. Here, all of the students who are involved in the process will face the challenges to solve the task or problem equally with the same specific purpose.

Using information gap is not only letting the learners gain information of the vocabulary and pronunciation or give them opportunity to use the target language as much as possible, but students will also be able to enjoy the teaching and learning process. It is reasonable because the purpose of this activity is not only to make them think of a way of solving the problem with their friends, but the most important is to see how far they are able to use English. Therefore, teacher should focus on assessing their students' speaking ability rather than the results of their discussion which will give them the chance to improve their communicative competence by speaking English freely with less frightening and pressure.

In accordance with to the definition and previous research above, the researcher tries to analyze the improvement of students's speaking ability after being taught through information gap activities and to find out which aspect of speaking skills that improves most by using Information Gap in teaching speaking

## METHODS

In this quantitative research, the research was conducted on one class only that was class VIII D from the second grade of MTs Pelita Purwodadi academic year 2019/2020. This class consisted of 30 students. The researcher used one group pre-test and post-test design, because there was only one group (class) involved in this research. Then, the researcher conducted pre-test, treatments, and post-test. The research design can be presented as follows:

### **T1 X T2**

T1 : Pre-test

T2 : Post-test

X : Treatment (teaching speaking using Information Gap)

(Hatch and Farhady (as cited in Setiyadi 2006:132))

A pre-test was given to find out students' basic speaking ability before treatment. Afterward, the researcher gave treatments to the students by using information gap task for the next three meetings. Finally, a post-test was administered to find out the students' speaking ability after treatments. The results of the data were analyzed by using Repeated Measure t-test (Paired Sample Test) from SPSS 17.

## RESULTS

The results of the students' speaking scored in pretest and posttest showed that there was improvement on the students speaking ability after treatments using Information Gap. It can be seen from the following table:

**Tabel 1. The Difference of Students' Speaking Ability in Pretest and Posttest**

Category	Pre-test	Post-test	Gain
Total	2243	2631	388
Mean	64.23	75.17	10.94

From the table above, it can be seen that there is an improvement on the students' speaking ability after being taught through Information Gap. The students' total score increases from 2243 in the pretest to 2631 in the posttest. Moreover, the mean score is also increased to 75.17 in the posttest from 64.23 in the pretest with gain point 10.94.

Furthermore, to determine whether the first hypothesis is accepted or rejected, the following criteria acceptances are used:

H<sub>1</sub>: There is significant improvement of students' speaking ability after being taught using Information Gap. The criteria H<sub>1</sub> is accepted if alpha is higher than 0.05 ( $\alpha > 0.05$ ).

H<sub>0</sub>: There is no significant improvement of students' speaking ability after being taught using Information Gap. The criteria H<sub>0</sub> is accepted if alpha is lower than 0.05 ( $\alpha > 0.05$ ).

**Tabel 2. Hypothesis Testing**

### Paired Samples Test

		Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
					Lower	Upper			
Pair 1	Pretest - Posttest	-10.943	8.774	1.483	-13.957	-7.929	-7.379	34	.000

The table above shows that the sig. value of the pretest and the posttest was 0.00. It means that there was a significant improvements of students' speaking ability after the implementation of information gap in teaching speaking since  $\text{Sig} < \alpha$  ( $0.00 < 0.05$ ). In other words, H<sub>0.1</sub> was rejected and H<sub>1.1</sub> was accepted.

Next, in order to find out which aspects of speaking which incresed the most, the researcher compared the means of students speaking skills in pretest and posttest

for each aspect. There were three speaking aspects which measured in this research, they are: grammar, fluency, and vocabulary. The comparison of could be seen on the table below:

**Tabel 3. Comparison of Aspects of Speaking Means**

No.	Speaking Aspects	Test		Improvement
		Before Treatment	After Treatment	
1.	Grammar	2.48	3.23	0.75
2.	Vocabulary	2.64	3.11	0.47
3.	Fluency	2.57	2.68	0.11

From the table above, the students' mean scores in the three aspects of speaking increased after the implementation of information gap activities in the class. The students' mean scores in grammar increased 0.75 from 2.48 in the pretest to 3.23 in the posttest. The vocabulary aspects increased 0.47 from 2.64 in the pretest to 3.11 in the posttest. Then, the students' fluency increased 0.11 from 2.57 to 2.68 in the posttest. From these results, it could be concluded that information gap technique could improve the students' speaking ability in the three aspects of speaking, especially grammar with the highest improvement 0.75.

## DISCUSSION

The result shows that using Information Gap is effective in improving the students' speaking ability. Establishing a task where the students were encouraged to use the target language paired with their friends can create a positive atmosphere, reducing effective barriers to language learning. This result was in line with the result of the research that was conducted by Jondeya (2011:122). Based on her research, Information Gap activities improve the students' interaction with the teacher and other students. When they were practicing in pair work and group work, all of them participated. It meant the students' participation in the class also improved. On the other hand, they decreased the amount of teacher talking time.

Information gap contributed the improvement on students' speaking skill in pretest and posttest through active contribution of students' activity by using familiar things they can find around them. By using vocabulary that the students already know, it gave an opportunity to relate their prior knowledge with the material that they would learn.

In addition, by giving the materials about something the students familiar with, it made students easier to understand the material and know how to use the words. Furthermore, information gap was used to encourage the students speaking in the target language more by giving more opportunity to speak English more in the classroom activity. That finding confirmed the result of the researches that were

conducted by Jondeya (2011), Shabrina (2013), and Suputri (2014). All of them proved that Information Gap was effective to improve the students' speaking ability. Information Gap can help the teacher to give more chance to the students using English as the target language more in the classroom activities.

The result of this study also showed that grammar had the highest increase among others. In the beginning of Information Gap, the students were asked to repeat the example from the teacher on how using grammatically correct sentences in asking and answering in English based on the material given. In the later process, the students were asked to ask and to answer their friends in English using the same pattern of grammar repeatedly. Therefore, the students were able to memorize the correct grammar used in the sentences by practicing asking and answering in order to complete the task.

The result of this research is also in line with the statement from Jondeya (2011:18). According to her, in performing certain language function, it is necessary for the teacher to give supply of certain words and language function in order to be able to wage successful fluent oral production with correct grammar. Grammar is needed for students to arrange a correct sentence in conversation, or the students' ability to manipulate structure and to distinguish appropriate grammatical form in appropriate ones. In line with Jondeya, the research that conducted by Suputri (2014:10) also proved that Information Gap were able to improve the students' speaking skill, especially grammar. In her research, in order to make the listener understand, a speaker needs to find the most appropriate words and a correct grammar to convey meaning accurately and precisely. Therefore, it can be concluded that grammar is a speaking aspect that is most increased after being taught through Information Gap.

## CONCLUSION

There were significant improvements on the students' speaking ability after the treatments using information gap task. The improvement can be seen from result of the posttest that was higher than the result of the pretest. The mean of posttest was 75, and mean of pretest was 64. The result of the hypothesis test shows that the hypothesis was accepted ( $p < 0.05$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ). Based on this result, the researcher concluded that information gap task can help the teacher to improve students' speaking ability. From the three aspects of speaking that were analyzed it can be concluded that grammar becomes the most increased aspect with 0.75 gain points while vocabulary increased to 0.47 and fluency increased to 0.11. This can be achieved because the students can practice using the target language with grammatically correct sentences more directly in conversation. With context and directly practicing it with friends, students can understand how to use the right grammar easily and memorize it longer.

## SUGGESTIONS

English teachers are recommended to apply Information Gap as the alternative strategy in teaching speaking using pictures because it can help the students in comprehending the materials easier. The teacher should give key words or guiding questions to the students if the students have no idea how to ask or to answer in English while practicing their English with Information Gap. Moreover, teachers should not too concern about the students have to fulfill the task on the sheet correctly, because the main focus on this technique is for students practicing their English ability, not completing the task only. There are a few studies of Information Gap and its implementation in teaching speaking. Thus, the further researcher could be about the study of this strategy in teaching speaking with various materials and also further research could use this strategy in study of another English skill.

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